

NOT NECESSARILY IN THE NEWS

A Public Policy Newsletter and Commentary , October 1, 2024 - Volume 140

The main thing is to keep the main thing, the main thing.”

Stephen Covey

FIREFEST – We all must be prepared!



September 28, 2024. What a great event today at the Middle School where the South Lake Tahoe Fire and Rescue Department, allied agencies, and Firewise had a plethora of information on fire safety and making our community safer. I am so proud of the work being done by Dianne Rees and other important volunteers to make us a fire safe community. *Thanks to all our safety heroes!*

None of us can forget the threat posed by the Angora Fire in 2007 or the very dangerous threat we faced from the Caldor Fire. Thanks to the courageous work of our Fire Department personnel and allied agencies we were spared the ravages of fires originating outside the City limits.

I must acknowledge that the USFS and CTC have been more engaged on the issue of fire safety, yet there is still a lot more that needs to be done. This is once again a reminder that USFS and CTC lands inside and outside the City limits must be better maintained to reduce dangerous fuel accumulation that spreads fire. The region and our city is not protected unless public agencies in the Basin engage in an active and accelerated fire fuel reduction strategy so that we reduce the threat of fire. This will require real leadership by regional and locally elected officials and determination to make it so. ***We must act now to reduce the risk of another Caldor Fire destroying our city. The issue is critical and needs immediate attention.***

We must become a model city and region for fire protection both on private and public lands, and if we do so it will make affordable insurance coverage more likely.

Finally, while safety agencies have recently published a draft evacuation plan for the Region and adjacent areas, we must be certain that we have an adequate number of routes for people to safely escape the Basin in the event of a major fire event.

No major high-density project should be built in the city or elsewhere until we are certain that we have adequate evacuation routes in place, and we have mitigated any adverse impacts high density projects have on existing neighborhoods. This is what the CEQA review process is all about.



THANK YOU, JOHN FRIEDRICH, FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THE CSLT – LETTER TO THE EDITOR



September 9, 2024

Dear Ms. Peterson:

I am writing to express my thanks and appreciation to Council Member John Friedrich for his service to the people of South Lake Tahoe as a member of the City Council. I want to thank him as well for his work in support of the Multicultural Alliance of which he and I were members.

John and I did not always share the same opinion on city policy matters, but he was always someone who would listen to a contrary point of view and civilly explain his point of view. I appreciated his engagement and civility. We need constructive civic engagement on important issues we face.

I wish John and his family good health, success, and good fortune. David Jinkens

THANK YOU, FORMER MAYOR MIDDLEBROOK

The City Council appointed former Mayor Devin Middlebrook to fill the unexpired term of John Friedrich on the City Council. It was very good of Mr. Middlebrook to offer his services and experience until the certification of the November 2024 election. He is showing “service above self” in his efforts to help our city out. I also want to thank those other community members who selflessly offered to serve. Thank you.

THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS OWE CITY TAXPAYERS’ MONEY - *Commentary on City Council staff report with additional commentary for the newsletter.*

September 24, 2024

Dear Mayor Bass and Council Members:

Thank you for continuing your service to our city.

I am writing to you to offer suggestions on a few matters coming to the City Council this evening. I apologize for the late commentary...

I want to thank the City Manager and staff as well for their service to our community. I know that they want to do the best job possible within policy guidelines set by the City Council.

First, a suggestion to create a MOU the City and California Tahoe Conservancy Federal and State agencies that if they acquire privately owned lands within the city limits that they should pay an in-lieu tax for the loss of property tax revenues. Over time City general fund revenue are

reduced when more and more lands are removed from the tax rolls. If the agencies are unwilling to pay an in-lieu tax, the city government should oppose the acquisition. I am certain that with a limited supply of buildable lands in city limits and our unique environmental setting, California State and Federal officials could be persuaded over time to make this so. Exceptions are often made if City officials pursue them. The real question becomes how many more privately held parcels does the USFS and CTC intend to acquire within the city limits and remove from the property tax rolls. What are their acquisition plans?

In addition, if the Federal or State government removes affordable units (or ones that can be made into such units) from the existing housing inventory, the agency should be required to pay for the cost to replace these units somewhere else in the city limits. Make the environmental improvements and replace the housing.



Vote on applying for up to \$3,000,000 in a Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO HOUSING) Grant Application. *This could be a positive opportunity.* It remains an outstanding question (that has yet to be answered), however, what is the regional share of affordable housing? What are all governmental entities in California and Nevada and within the Tahoe Basin doing to provide needed affordable housing? The City of South Lake Tahoe and its taxpayers

should not be expected to take care of the affordable housing needs for the region. Maybe the grant will encourage a review and determination of the fair share allocation of affordable housing for the region among other things.

Finally, all new higher density development of housing should be required to go through appropriate CEQA review to evaluate environmental impacts and ways in which negative impacts (traffic, parking, drainage, water, sewer, visibility, pedestrian facilities, lighting, and if there are sufficient evacuation routes in the event of catastrophic fire, etc.) can be mitigated.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer commentary and best wishes for a productive meeting.
Respectfully, David Jinkens

BANNING PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS - California governor signs law banning all plastic shopping bags at grocery stores



We all know that plastic bags and products including microplastics are a pernicious pollutant source to our environment including our Lake, disposal sites and habitat. Eliminating this pollutant from our environment is important to creating a sustainable city and State. My thanks and appreciation goes to Governor Newsom and the Legislature for banning plastic shopping bags.

FILE - A plastic bag sits along a roadside in Sacramento, Calif., Oct. 25, 2013. (AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli, File)

AP News SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — “Paper or plastic” will no longer be a choice at grocery store checkout lines in California under a new law signed Sunday by Gov. Gavin Newsom that bans all plastic shopping bags.

California had already banned thin plastic shopping bags at supermarkets and other stores, but shoppers could purchase bags made with a thicker plastic that purportedly made them reusable and recyclable.

The new measure, approved by state legislators last month, bans all plastic shopping bags starting in 2026. Consumers who don’t bring their own bags will now simply be asked if they want a paper bag.

State Sen. Catherine Blakespear, one of the bill’s supporters, said people were not reusing or recycling any plastic bags ban...”

OVERVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL PLATFORM AND OVERALL CITY VISION - DAVID JINKENS FOR CITY COUNCIL

- **NO on the VACANCY Tax (Measure N)**
- **Be Fiscally Prudent – Live Within Our Means**
- **PRIORITIZE Road Repairs within the existing budget.**
- **Support Police and Fire to Ensure Public Safety**
- **Ensure Adequate Fire Evacuation Routes**
- **Affordable Housing: Collaborating with existing affordable housing providers and using creative financing tools to meet community needs *without new taxes*.**
- **Work on uniting the City Council and our community by finding creative, mutually agreeable and realistic answers to important local issues.**
- **Economic Growth: Creating a business and resident-friendly regulatory environment to grow the economy and create jobs.**
- **Land Use Planning: *Leading* in prudent land use planning that respects residents and public safety.**

MORE NURSES ARE NEEDED – *Why the veto?*

Nurses are the backbone of the health care system here and throughout the State. In a puzzling move Governor Newsom vetoes bill that would’ve allowed community colleges to offer nursing bachelor’s degree.

According to a story by Danielle Dawson, KTRLA, “A state bill allowing community colleges to offer bachelor’s degrees in nursing was vetoed by Gov. Gavin Newsom on Friday.

Senate Bill 895, introduced by state Sen. Richard Roth (D-Riverside), sought to expand on a recently implemented law that opened up the door for community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees by adding bachelors of science in nursing (BSN) degrees to the mix.

The bill was lauded as a potential game-changer for nursing education, making the often-expensive pursuit more accessible to low-income students while addressing a critical shortage of working nurses that has placed significant stress on local hospitals...”

The back story is the California college and university systems opposed the bill and wanted to keep the training for themselves...how selfish.

UPDATE - AFFORDABLE HOUSING BUILT WITH CITY MONIES MUST GIVE LOCALS IN NEED A PREFERENCE ALL OF THE TIME – *if not, why build it?*

Note: Some people have been critical of my persistent comments that the City Council must give locals a preference when new affordable housing is built. As I related to city officials many months ago, such local preferences can be given after the city has prepared a study showing that a local preference would not discriminate against protected classes of people. In fact, a local preference benefits our diverse city population.

Here is an update on my letter of August 25, 2024, to the John Stewart Company that is supposed to be screening applicants for the opening of Phase I of the new Sugar Pine Affordable Housing. I reported to you in my last newsletter that I was inquiring whether a locals preference promised by City officials would be followed. Sadly, to date, no one at that company has had the courtesy of replying and answering what should be a simple question. In addition, locals who applied for housing are still waiting to hear from the Company. This is not an acceptable performance for a project that has public monies as part of its financing.

DAVID JINKENS, CANDIDATE FOR SOUTH LAKE TAHOE CITY COUNCIL

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CANDIDATO AL CONCEJO MUNICIPAL DE SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

Espero que todos disfruten de buena salud y buena fortuna.

**David Jinkens, MPA
Candidate for SLT City Council 2024
Good Government Advocate**

“SI, PODEMOS”